IBM

Aug 7 - 71 Sat.

Dear Harold,

Russell met, and became friendly with the Panthers in 1970, Janurary, and became more public in advocating guns. Shortly after he purchased his first gun and began to believe more in the doing than in the talking, of revolution.

At first however, we'd go out together and laugh and "play" with the gun, shooting at tin cans and old crumbling branches. Then suddenly he bought another with money we just didn't have. We no longer laughed when we went shooting. He became serious then, forming RISC and going to practice on weekends, all the while becoming closer with a friend of his whom you've met. (not Paul) This was in the spring and by the summer we were taking out between four and eleven people every Sunday. Russ was getting more charged but criticised those who refused to by guns of their own. By now he was receiving a sportsmen's magazine, and gun dealer's newspapers monthly.

Early Spring

Some time (I'm not exactly sure when) we came to your house with the girl interested in Judo, for the purposes of gathering information from the manul you had. Russel had decided to stop being public and to form his own guerilla band. THE MXXXXXX MANUAL WAS FOR HIS OWN INFORMAtion.

Fall Summer

At this time he was disgusted with the left. RISC was sinking into the ground, and one of our former allies dropped away from us.

By September, Russell had quite a few books on street fighting, guerilla warfare, explosives and even a book on military sanitation. He had gotten them from answering ads in the magizines. I think, though I'm not positive, that one of the ads in the magizine was for the mm. I think I remember expressing surprise that they would place an ad. In any case, he did contact them in the form of mrs. d., and asked her for advise on how to form an underground organization. She was aloof but helpful, and sent from time to time appx. six, maybe four letters to him. I saw the letters from her and would swear to their validity. She typed them herself causally mentioning BOB and how he was getting railroaded.

Let me skip ahead in time to last May 71 since we're on the subject of her. Russell told her JIM HENDERSON or JIM HENDERSEN wasn't his real name, but if she wanted to have one of her people contact him he was listed in the phone book as such., and would be happy to meet with anyone.

From September 1970 until probably now he collected weapons and parts for making bombs. There are two bottles of something in the closet there on Pit Street but he says they can just as easily be used for other things. "Other things" is not their purpose. He has an M 16, two Mausers, and a shot gun, underwater burning cord for dynamite, sleeping bags and a year's supply of water. He has quite a few rounds and a machine for making shells with a keg of shinny blakk powder to match. I think he's also got a couple of blasting caps though I'm not sure.

We're up to spring now of 71 around March or April when Mrs. d. writes that an informant, posing as one who was forming his own group is sent the mm mailing list. He promptly turned it over to the police. Now the mm members are rightly paranoid. Plus funds, she reports are gone and On Target will no longer be able to be published. Around that time Russell got a FREE BOB pin but I don't think he wore it other than in a picture I took of him. I think it was also around this time or perhaps way back in the fall that Russell told of the Maryland informant giving, I believe, information to the police. Mrs.d. wrote back saying she probably knew who it was since there was a fellow who was trying to take over the Maryland area and calling himself a mm. He had been purged eariler due to irresponsibility I think.

FACT

Russell is in a power bag because he has and always has had a need to control situations. When someone disagrees with him or does something he doesn't like he dismisses them for ever as a worthy human being. He believes he's right and thought this is the oldest line, the world is wrong. I can't impress upon you enough how true this is.

OPINION

And the reason for his interest, or former interest in themm. is simply because he's very impressed with bd's writings. I think he puts b. next to Malcolm on his respect list. He also believes in being prepared and certainly from reports we've seen, b was prepared for anything. (Except living perhaps) Russell always spoke of the guns and things as finding a good way to die, not live, die. That brings up another interesting question.. about how much he really cares to live. Of course this is speculation.
To condense the whole thing for you; Russell seemed to change about the time RISC was folding and has progressively gotten more under than over, more in himself, more alienated from those who loved him, more critical, more impatient, and finally, more silently politically serious.
Harold, I'm not sure there was a switch. I wanted to warn you in case, but if he can betray anyone for any reason, he's lost something very dear to those o us who thought we knew him. If a man has lost the basis for his existence, is there much he wouldn't do to make himself more comfortable? What CAN a man lose after he's lost himself? This is all so ambiguous but so is Russell. I have only questions, no answers unless they, in themselves are facts. How could he turn to mrs.d. without turning away from what he saw to be the left? Especially when he told me he related more to the lifestyle of the right and that this corespondence was a logical continuence of what he's been doing for the past two years. (Enclosed is a Page #2 of a letter he wrote me on June 13 of this year. P lease send it back)
About the gun; he loaned it to a Panther, going to the DC convention last Dec.. or there around,and worried when she didn't bring it back, that a crime could be committed with it,since it was legal and registered in his name we tried hard to contact her in vain. As things happen, a gun he sold to Panthers months before did come back in the form ofpolice knocking at our door. It seems two Panthers we'd never heard of had been picked up in New York with it and were being held for questioning in the deaths of the two policemen who were shot. I'm sure your memory will be refreshed because a big thing was made of it this last May. Russ squirmed off the line on that one and I'm sure he'll tellyou about it much better than I.
The ~~Vinceramos~~ Vincermos is made up mostly of undangerous college kids who can afford not to work over the summer. Most, or a lot of the people who go on the brigdades are pretty well off and gentle unless I'm mistaken. .....
Which gets us into betrayals. If I'm not mistaken, even with the way he feels about the Panthers now, I don't think he'd ~~xxxx~~ sell them out. He loved them too much and they loved him, unlike most of the left people we came in contact with.
And as far as someone holding anything over his head; I strongly doubt that to o. We've discussed it and he's understood in a war that things are often taken away to prompt submissiveness rather than outward torture for others to see. This is one of the main reason he doesn't smoke anymore, or drink or have any thing anyone else would want. Russell is too free to be under anyone. I'm sure he'd kill himself before he'd ever let that happen.
About me and David you were right and now I'm just biding my time, He hassles me on what I believe and anything else at all unique about me. I guess it takes distance to see big men, such as Russell and just close examination to see small fellows such as Dave. I guess I'm beginning to mourn a bit. I did love Russell very much. I wouldn't be so sorry if it hadn't been so good at times. I miss him very much.
I hope your Lillian is well. It'll be an incomplete summer without seeing you both, you in your shorts, nose burried in a book or stretching your neck to make a point. And Lillian, like smoke, drifting in and out of the rooms, startled like a deer almost when someone quietly enters. I miss you all and I'm just very very sorry.

Love Like

If you've any more questions please ask them.

We move very fast -- like an express train, and once you get on it hurts to jump off. But sometimes it's necessary because you may not want to go where the train wind up going. Look, we started out from Chicago to get in touch with Betty Shabazz, and two years later I wind up corresponding with Mrs. DeBugh. But it followed logically, there was no stop, no break in continuity or anything -- just the natural momentum of my whatever it is took me to the opposite end of the spectrum without ever changing course. And of course I never stop to rest or anything -- if I stop it's to look for a new program, for a new direction to go in; my life continues and perpetuates itself in Brownian movements.

What I'm saying in all this is that I think the decision you made was one you were going to have to make sooner or later anyhow, because I just can't give you the type of relationship and security you need, and it's clear that I'm not going to change, except to keep change as one of the guiding forces of my life.

Love,

Malcolm

6/13 to Lita